

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Lorraine Miguel, 81, retired nurse and cashier

"In those days, we have hard life . . . All my brothers and sisters, parental [i.e., arranged] marriage, you see. If he want them to get married, he want them to get married. Just like me. This is parental marriage. I don't know my husband at all. He came from Hawaii and he came to the Philippines. In those days, parents are very forceful."

Lorraine (Velasco) Miguel, Ilocano, was born in Ilocos Norte, Philippines on September 7, 1903. Her parents were farmers. After completing the seventh grade, she attended a Bible school.

In 1926, she married Pastor Matias Miguel, who had returned briefly to the Philippines from Lahaina, Maui. Following the marriage, they both went to Lahaina, where Lorraine assisted Matias in his church duties.

In 1931, the Miguels moved to Oahu and, after a brief stay in Kakaako, lived in Waialua. A few years later, they moved to Makaweli, Kauai, where Lorraine worked as a nurse teaching women birth control methods. In 1941, the Miguels moved back to Waialua. Lorraine worked as a cashier at the Schofield Army Barracks mess hall during World War II.

In 1952, the Miguels moved to Kalihi and began holding church services at their home. Lorraine worked at a convalescent home and retired in 1968.

Tape No. 11-21-1-84

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Lorraine Miguel (LM)

January 9, 1984

Kalihi, Oahu

BY: Michiko Kodama (MK)

MK: This is an interview with Mrs. Lorraine Miguel at her home in Kalihi on January 9, 1984.

Okay. First of all, can you tell me when you were born, Mrs. Miguel?

LM: I was born in the Philippines, northern part of Ilocos Norte. I was born in September 7, 1903.

MK: Can you tell me how many brothers and sisters were in your family?

LM: I have one sister and five brothers.

MK: And what number child were you in your family?

LM: I'm the last in the family.

MK: What were your mother and father's names?

LM: Cesario Acido and Ursula Velasco.

MK: Can you tell me what your parents were doing for a living?

LM: They were farmers.

MK: What types of crops were they growing?

LM: Rice, vegetables and some tobacco. There is chicken, too, and pigs.

MK: In the barrio that you were living in, can you describe what it looked like back then?

LM: The barrio is beautiful, you know, because you can see greens and the planting of rice. The ocean is not so far from us, so my father has nets. Big nets, fishing nets. Plenty people hold that net and then they go on the sea and they catch fish. Plenty fish. My father used to make comb. You know, comb from a wood?

And then, in those days, you know, you could hardly have money. Because it's hard to have money, but the life is good. We eat fish, we don't buy it. We eat vegetables, we don't buy it in those days. We have everything. I mean to say, from the labor. You know, crops.

When I was small, I went to school. We have five centavos, you see, for our lunch. But we can go home for lunch because the school is close to my home.

MK: Gee, to have five centavos was a lot of money for a child, yeah?

LM: Right.

MK: When you were living in the barrio, what did the houses look like?

LM: Oh, the houses is. . . . My father's life is a medium. It's not too poor; it's not too rich. But he is in the medium type. He get plenty plants around the yard. We have some oranges, mangoes, papayas, some coconuts, and he even planted coffee. So, we have plenty food.

MK: You mentioned that you went to school. How about your brothers and sisters?

LM: Some went as far as fourth grade. In those days, we have hard life, and they get married fast, you know. All my brothers and sisters, parental [i.e., arranged] marriage, you see. If he want them to get married, he want them to get married. Just like me. This is parental marriage. I don't know my husband at all. He came from Hawaii and he came to the Philippines. In those days, parents are very forceful. If they have visitors and you pass by in front of them, you (chuckles) sure you get it after they leave. I don't know, my father was the Spanish type.

MK: So, he was very strict with the children?

LM: Yeah, strict with them. But, anyway, we are glad because we learn that.

MK: When you were living in the barrio as a young girl, can you kind of describe to me what a typical day was like for you? From the time you woke up in the morning, what did you do?

LM: To tell you the truth, I'm not ashamed to tell you that I was lazy in those days. (Chuckles) When I wake up, I just wake up when I wanted. I do something if I want to. But to tell you, I have plenty plants--roses and gardenia. But I have someone, my neighbor, a girl that used to go to the well. She draw up the water and we water our plants. That's the way my life is at that time.

MK: So, you would do some chores around the place?

LM: Oh, yes. I clean the house, too. But not all the time.

MK: Tell me about the school that you attended.

LM: Oh, yes. The school (I) attended in the barrio, it's about. . . . When I was in the fourth grade, I go to--we call it "town." We call it in the town. We go to school over there.

MK: What kinds of subjects were you taught in the school?

LM: In those days, they teach us English, arithmetic, and history. I forgot all the things. Industrial work, too. I used to play baseball. Ladies baseball. Softball, they call it, yeah?

MK: How were the teachers in those days?

LM: The teachers are very good. They are not graduates, but they are very smart. In those days, the teachers, even though they didn't graduate high school, they take correspondence studies, you see, and they were very smart.

MK: What did you like most about school?

LM: Well, most everything I like, but I like arithmetic. I went to another town, you see. I was one of the contestants of arithmetic. Adding, multiply, and subtraction. I was in the second place only.

MK: "Only" in the second place? (Laughs) That's pretty good, though. What did you like the least in school? The thing that you didn't like about school?

LM: I like it. I like to go to school, but sometimes I am naughty. When I see the teacher, and then I make fun of him. One time, the supervising teacher came to our school. I was in the back of one girl. She get belt on the back. I took that belt, I tie it on the back (laughs) on the chair.

(Laughter)

LM: When she stand up, she could not stand up any more. The supervising teacher saw it. He called me in front, let me stand up. He let me hold a stone on both sides. Let me stand up over there. Oh, boy, I don't know how long was that, but it was really long. I remember that.

MK: How many years did you go to school?

LM: Well, I went as far as seventh grade. That's all I went. But when I was going already to the high school in Laoag City, my husband came. He came to the house, ask my father that he wants to marry me.

MK: How did he [LM's husband] know your family and you especially?

LM: He didn't know me and I don't know him too, but his sister knows me very well and I know her, too. They always come to our town. They sell those wines. They wanted to change it with rice. So, they had been staying in our house. Because my house is kinda high, and they can put all their things down downstairs. So, that's how maybe he know me, but he does not know me. I think the sister told him about me. It so happened that it was our town fiesta and they came for the fiesta.

MK: Can you describe for me what your town fiesta was like in those days?

LM: In those days, they have, you know, comedians? Something like that? We call it "komedya." In those days, it's so distinguished. I mean, that kind of play. So, every town on the south, they come and see.

MK: Was your town fiesta for the town saint?

LM: Yeah, they remember something.

MK: What kind of religious fiesta was it?

LM: It's not religious. It's the whole town fiesta. It's not religious, but they remember, yeah, something like that. Saints.

MK: For the fiesta, you had comedians come in. . . .

LM: Comedian, and some kind of program from the schools, drama, something like that. And so many feria. They call it "ferias." So many sales on the ground. Something just like here.

MK: Your future husband and sister-in-law were in your town on that fiesta time?

LM: Right. And it so happened in my house, they all come. You know, they all came. My father used to prepare plenty food. We had plenty food. So, even the supervising teacher came too, that time. We have a very good party. All the guests--we have long tables. Long tables, like that, and it's all around. We all sit together. Some girls, some boys, some men. Some of them are married. Some of them not married. So, I sit down. I sit down in here, and my husband was there, but he was still single yet. One girl over there, one man [over there]. And my father (chuckles) tease us. He said, "Oh, I think this is a good way that the one who is sitting down here. . . ." Girl, yeah, and boy. And the one who is sitting down here is a girl, see? He want to match marriage, this one. And my husband answered him. He said, "Oh, no. If you allow us, the one in front of us and the one in front of this one, that's the one we want to get married with." (Chuckles) So, now, my father, oh, boy, he said, "Okay," that time, but I don't like. I didn't like him. I don't like him at all that time,

because I don't know him.

MK: So that day, Mr. Miguel asked your father if he could get married to you?

LM: Yeah, but I went to hide to my sister's house. But then, you know how it is. If they like, something like that. And you can't do anything. Because I wanted to continue my studies in the city. My ambition at that time is to be a nurse. But I was married. But then, I went to Bible women's school. But only six months, because he came and marry me.

MK: At that Bible women's school, what faith did you learn about?

LM: I was a Protestant then.

MK: And so, you learned about Protestantism in that school?

LM: Yes.

MK: What was your husband's occupation at the time he asked for your hand?

LM: He just came from Hawaii and he was a minister in Lahaina, Maui. That's why my father (chuckles) was interested because he's a Protestant himself.

MK: And so, even at that time when you didn't want to get married to your husband, you had to follow . . .

LM: I have to obey. Yes.

MK: . . . your father's wish. So, when it came time after the decision was made, when did you first meet your husband to actually talk with him about the marriage?

LM: No, I didn't talk at all. They just go on with the marriage. Because I went to hide.

MK: How was your wedding?

LM: My wedding was all right because it was in Laoag City. Dr. Pickett married us. That's long, long time ago.

MK: What do you remember about a reception or party after that?

LM: In that hall, they giving us reception. I think Dr. Pickett and the American missionaries prepared everything.

MK: What types of customs were followed at that reception?

LM: Well, I wore Filipino gown, as usual. You know how it is. My husband, of course, in a suit with necktie. It's not very. . . . It's

just like "merienda," they call it, because it was in the afternoon. It's not really dinner time yet. So, that's what they did. But it's good. It's just like propose time, just like.

MK: I heard that there's a Filipino custom where at weddings, the bride will be dancing and a lot of people will pin money to the bride's dress or veil?

LM: That's an old custom, but we didn't do that.

MK: You didn't?

LM: No. That's a Christian hall.

MK: Oh. So, as soon as you got married, where did you two live?

LM: In his town. Because San Nicolas, Ilocos Norte, and Laoag, Ilocos Norte is close together. It's not far.

MK: So, when you lived in San Nicolas, what did you two do for a living?

LM: Well, of course, my mother-in-law was still there. My sister-in-laws were there. So, as usual, we got to eat together. We go to the market together.

MK: You stayed there for three months, and you came to Hawaii?

LM: Yes.

MK: But before you left for Hawaii, what did you hear about life in Hawaii?

LM: Life in Hawaii, they said, it's good. My father is very sure that life in Hawaii is good, so I have to follow him. Because in his [husband's] work as a minister, he needs a wife [who] will help him in the work. So, because of that, well, I have to make it good, too. I don't love him, but we had to. After a while, well, we learn to live together nicely.

MK: As you prepared for your trip to Hawaii, what preparations did you make in terms of what to bring and everything else for coming to Hawaii?

LM: Well, of course, I bring my clothes. That's all, I think. We bring our things.

MK: What were your feelings about leaving the Philippine Islands for Hawaii?

LM: Oh, I was miserable. Because I didn't like to come in the first place anyway.

MK: When you first came to Hawaii, you went to Lahaina. And when you saw Lahaina for the first time, what were your thoughts about the place?

LM: Oh, I was disappointed because it's in the plantation, you see. But anyway, we didn't live in the camp. We live outside. So, it's just like a town. We live on the road, the main highway. It was all right, however I was thinking only in the Philippine yet at that time. I want to go back after three months, but I cannot go back because. . . .

MK: You mentioned that you lived outside of the camp area. What was the name of the church that your husband ministered at?

LM: Filipino Methodist Church.

MK: What other ministers were there at that church?

LM: There was a missionary. He name is Mr. Gillis.

MK: At that time, about how many Filipino members were there of that church?

LM: It's not really a church yet. It was a club in the camp. That's the place where we hold our services.

MK: When you lived in Lahaina, what types of people did you become friendly with?

LM: Well, I was friendly with everybody because we had some Japanese, too, over there. Mostly, of course, Filipinos. We have Hawaiians, Americans.

MK: Were there a number of Filipinas there, too?

LM: Women, scarcely you can find a woman. That's why, those men were (chuckles) very hungry of women at that time. And even then, the husband is over there. If they want to just take the wife, they can take the wife.

MK: Were you at any time worried?

LM: I was not worried about that. Because if you don't want it, well. . . . My husband is over there, I don't want. . . .

MK: While your husband was doing his ministering work . . .

LM: I go with him.

MK: How did you participate in that work?

LM: Well, I teach the small children. Sunday school.

MK: I know that later on you went to Lanai. Why is it that you went to Lanai?

LM: They told him to go and do the work, but we stayed there only for three months.

MK: What did you think of Lanai?

LM: I don't like it at all.

MK: Why?

LM: They have plenty fleas. (Chuckles) That's why we went back.

MK: While you were in Lahaina, you again stayed at the same place and were involved in the same type of work.

LM: Yes.

MK: And then I know that you went back to the Philippines. Why was that?

LM: You know why? Because we wanted to stay there already. Because life over there was so good in the Philippines at that time. That's why we want to go back. We sold everything, then we went back. My first daughter was still three or four years old.

MK: Where in the Philippines did you go back to?

LM: In San Nicolas.

MK: And again, what type of work did you get involved in?

(Telephone rings. Taping stops, then resumes.)

MK: So, what type of work did you two get involved in when you went back to the Philippines?

LM: I didn't do anything. But I went back to the high school. But I stayed there only for four months because I have a daughter and nobody takes care.

MK: When you say that you went back to the high school, you were again back in your studies?

LM: Yes. But only four months.

MK: I noticed in your record that you only stayed in the Philippines for a little while and you came back.

LM: Not the first time. In 1930. We stayed there for one year. My husband came back.

MK: Oh, oh. You stayed there how long then?

LM: One year. And then, he took us again.

MK: Why is it that you again came back to Hawaii?

LM: Because he like us to come back because I have only one daughter yet at that time. He wants to see her, his daughter too.

MK: So, it was only yourself and your daughter that went to the Philippines?

LM: No. All of us went to the Philippines, but he came back to Hawaii first. And then, after one year, he took us again.

MK: When you came back, you went to Kakaako in 1931?

LM: Yes. That's right.

MK: What did you think of Kakaako? That's a different thing from living in the country. What did you think of Kakaako?

LM: Kakaako is all right yet in those days. You are not afraid of anybody yet at that time.

MK: Where was your house located in Kakaako?

LM: You know those two-story buildings by the side of the road?

MK: Would you know the address or street name?

LM: No. I forget.

MK: What types of people were in the neighborhood? What kind of people . . .

LM: There are all Filipinos there. Some. Some are different nationality. That's the place where [Filipino Labor] Commissioner [Cayetano] Ligot was residing also. Those apartments were nice before. Those beautiful apartments.

MK: What do you remember about Commissioner Ligot?

LM: We used to mingle with them. When they have parties, something like that, we go with them. My husband and I, we don't have a job yet at that time. He's selling something from the Philippines, and that's where we get our money. You know, in those days, everything was cheap.

MK: What types of conversation did you and the Commissioner have?

LM: Well, I don't remember at all, but anyway it's just like casual conversation.

MK: Because of the commissioner's work in investigating working conditions among the Filipinos in Hawaii, would you remember any of his comments about Filipinos working in Hawaii?

LM: Well, he was defending something, because Filipinos in Hawaii before was discriminated, isn't it? So, he was doing something that will promote the Filipinos in Hawaii.

MK: After living in Kakaako for a little while, you moved to Waialua.

LM: That's right.

MK: You were at Waialua about maybe . . .

LM: I forgot to mention when we were in Kakaako, we used to play tennis, my husband and I, Commissioner Ligot, and the sons. And some of our friends over there. We go to Waikiki early in the morning because we don't do anything. And that was good. Waikiki was so nice yet before. No more big buildings like that. There was a tall building, of course, but it's not like that. And it's neat in Waikiki before.

MK: Where in Waikiki did you play tennis?

LM: We have a tennis court close the zoo at that time. That's the place where we used to play tennis. Now, we went to Waialua after that.

MK: Why did you move from Kakaako to Waialua?

LM: Because he found a job there.

MK: What kind of a job?

LM: Camp police.

MK: What were his duties as a camp policeman?

LM: Well, he visit homes. He watch at night.

MK: What did you do during the time you lived in Waialua? That first time?

LM: This is in 1931, yeah? I used to be a housewife yet.

MK: By that time, you had two children? I know you had one in Maui.

LM: Yeah, because I have the second boy in 1933.

MK: So, you had your first daughter and your boy. I was wondering what you thought of the Waialua camps. Because you had seen the camps in Lahaina. How did the Waialua camps compare?

LM: I used to work in the hospital, you know, after I get my boy.

I don't know how old was he. But I have somebody with me.

MK: Was that right before the war that you worked in the hospital?

LM: Oh, no. After the war. [LM worked in the hospital during the World War II years.]

MK: When you first lived in Waialua, I was wondering, how did the camps look to you?

LM: It was nice. It was good. But you know how it is. The people is receiving only meager pay yet at that time, but they live happily because in their yard they have a wide place to plant something. They take care some chickens, too, sometimes.

MK: And then, 1934, you moved to Makaweli, Kauai.

LM: Right.

MK: Again, why did you move to over there?

LM: We are finding the different places. Yeah, we moved to Kauai in 1934. Because they offer him a job over there. I don't know what was that already. In the store maybe. Because he could not get any minister's job because it was already filled at that time when we come back. So, we went to find another place to go. So, we went to Kauai.

MK: And at Makaweli, he was working in a store?

LM: Store. At the meantime, he was helping the minister over there.

MK: What was the name of the church that he was helping at?

LM: Kauai Methodist Church.

MK: At that time, what kind of congregation went to that church?

LM: It was mixed, too, because Filipinos, but few of the white people come.

MK: Because there were also Filipinos in the church, what was the language used in ministering to the people?

LM: English and Ilocano.

MK: So, most of the Filipinos that attended that church were Ilocanos, then?

LM: Right.

MK: What kind of work was your husband doing at the store?

LM: He was clerk, selling things.

MK: What store was that?

LM: It was Makaweli store.

MK: Was it connected with the plantation?

LM: Right.

MK: A plantation-run store?

LM: Mm hmm [yes].

MK: What are your feelings about your life in Makaweli?

LM: Well, it was good because I have plenty friends over there who was helping me. And then, I was working in there. In the hospital and out, too. I visit the camps teaching the Filipinos how to have birth control that time. They don't know how to insert in, so I have to demonstrate all those things.

MK: How did you get involved in teaching women about birth control then?

LM: Because I was working in the hospital. Oh, no. I was working in the baby house, too. I watch those children that the mother goes to work. And after that, I go to the camp.

MK: You know, your teaching the women about birth control, was that sponsored by the hospital?

LM: Right.

MK: In those days, was it very difficult to teach women about birth control?

LM: It's very difficult, yes. Because those are not as good as today's.

MK: What were the women's reaction?

LM: (Chuckles) They don't like it.

MK: Why was that?

LM: Well, it's not nice to say in here, I think.

MK: Anyway, you taught birth control then, back then. How long did you do that at Makaweli?

LM: I think four years, you know. Four years or more.

MK: You were raising your children on Kauai. How was Kauai as a place

to raise your children?

LM: It was good. That's the place where I learn how to drive, too.

MK: How did you learn how to drive?

LM: Well, I watch my husband during the changing of the gear. When the car is not running, I go there and try what it is. How to do that.

MK: Were there any other Filipino women at that time driving cars?

LM: Not very many.

MK: When you were living in Kauai, were there many Filipino women at that time?

LM: Mm hmm. There are plenty already at that time.

MK: And then, in 1941, you again moved back to Waialua. Why was that? Why did you move back to Waialua from Kauai?

LM: Because the plantation expired. They had given all their--what do you call that money that they give? Severance pay. And we have to move from there. That's why we went back to Waialua.

MK: You lived there in Waialua till 1952. So, you lived there a long time, yeah? Can you describe for me where you lived in Waialua?

LM: We live in Spanish Camp, they call it. Across the high school. That's the time I was working in the hospital. And when I go out, I go out again in the camp. Because one week. . . . I go with the head nurse over there in the camp.

MK: What was your work as a nurse?

LM: That's a practical nurse, you know. Well, in the hospital you have men's ward, you have women's ward, you have children's ward, and you have office too over there. I work rotation. So, we follow that rotation. If I am on the men's ward, well, have to be in the men's ward one week. In the women's ward for one week, another week. And the children's ward for a week. And office place is one week, too. It's like that.

MK: Basically, what type of work does the practical nurse do?

LM: In those days, you have to learn something else. I used to give the injection. We bathe patients. That's just like we do now. When somebody give birth, I be over there. If you are at night duty, well, we have the head nurse, too, over there. We cannot do anything until we call the doctor.

MK: During those days, what were your hours like as a practical nurse?

LM: It's rotation, as I told you. If you work from eight o'clock in the morning, you go home at four o'clock. If you work at four in the afternoon, you work until four to eight. That's eight hours. As I told you, it's rotation and go back and forth.

MK: What was your pay during those days?

LM: I received forty dollars a month.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MK: Okay, you were telling me that your ambition was to be a nurse.

LM: Yes. And I went to apply. And they took me in.

MK: Where did you receive your training or preparation for the work?

LM: I didn't go to school about nursing, but, you know, when you go to work already you have to know something. You read some books or you read something else. In those days, they take anybody that can speak English there.

MK: What was the name of the hospital that you worked at?

LM: That's Waialua Hospital.

MK: Was that a hospital run by the plantation?

LM: Plantation, right.

MK: You mentioned to me that during the war you worked there at the hospital. Because it was wartime, do you remember any changes that occurred or incidents that occurred at the hospital?

LM: Yes. The war broke out, you know that. When they bombed Wheeler Field. We heard in the radio the fall of Bataan and Corregidor. Then, after that, I resigned. They were taking ladies to work in Schofield. So, I resigned. I went to work in Schofield at the mess hall.

MK: What kind of work did you do at the mess hall?

LM: I was a cashier. They told me to recruit ladies. So, I packed them all in my car. But in those days, you have to black out your car. I got very hard time to drive because you come from Waialua to Schofield about four o'clock.

MK: In the morning?

LM: In the morning.

MK: I was wondering, why did you resign your job and go to Schofield?

LM: Because they said the salary is higher. You know how it is. I have children. Of course, my husband was working, too, in the store. But I want to do something to help him to manage the family.

MK: Later, I know that you again changed job, and you started working for the Navy. Can you explain how you got the job?

LM: Yeah. After that Schofield job, I heard again that salary is higher. It so happened that all the men went to the war. They were all [at the] front. So, not very many men was left. I went to work there. Of course, I didn't know that they would take me as a clerical job, but they took me anyway. My work was to print all the workers' name. I was in the adding machine and printing machine. After I don't know how many years I work in that office supply, and then if no more men, I used to drive the big trucks, too, you know, in those days. Not very long, of course, but. And we had to open boxes. As I told you, there was no men to do.

MK: During the war years while you were working at these different places, how were the children at home taken care of?

LM: Oh, I have somebody to take care.

MK: What type of work was your husband involved in at that time?

LM: He was still working in the store.

MK: And at that time, was he still also involved in ministry work?

LM: Yes, sometimes. But after that. . . . Little while, because when the minister died, that's the time he took over just for two years. The Waialua Evangelical Church.

MK: As the wife of the minister, what were your duties to help him?

LM: Well, I help him do something in the church, too. I manage to teach the young children about Bible.

MK: At that time, were there any women's organizations or clubs associated with the church that you worked with?

MK: I was wondering, how long did you work for the Navy?

LM: Oh, it was only about a year, I think.

MK: So, when the war ended, what did you do after the war?

LM: I was home and. . . . I went back again to Schofield.

MK: Oh, and worked at the Army mess hall?

LM: Yeah, mess hall. At Wahiawa, you know. Wahiawa, because they had one mess hall over there, too, that time. As a cashier, too.

MK: And how long did you do that?

LM: Well, not very long. Because the war was over at that time. I used to bring money to Punahou. All the monies that we receive from the mess hall. I used to go with our boss to go in Punahou to store, I think, that one. I don't know what he does. But I used to drive my car and take him over there.

MK: All this time while you were living in Waialua area, there are many Filipinos there, many Filipino families.

LM: Plenty.

MK: I was wondering, what type of community get-togethers among the Filipinos did you have at that time? Like, Rizal Day celebrations?

LM: Oh, yes. I forgot to tell you about that.

MK: Can you tell me about the Rizal Day celebrations in Waialua?

LM: Rizal Day celebration is very gallant celebration at that time. It was not so many people yet celebrating Rizal Day at that time in Waialua. As usual, we have some parties. Yeah, they used to serve food over there and have services for him [Dr. Jose Rizal].

MK: Were you and the pastor heavily involved in those type of activities?

LM: Yes. We do something for the people, too.

MK: After the war, in 1952, you moved to Kalihi. I was wondering, why did you move from Waialua and come to Kalihi?

LM: Excuse me, because I remember now. From Waialua, in 1950, we went home to the Philippines. That's the time we brought everything again and we don't want to come back. But that's the time when we came back only about--how many months did I tell you there?

MK: Gee, I'm not sure.

LM: Three or four months only when we came back. But we left my husband there because he was working again as a pastor at one of the town in the Philippines, Ilocos Norte. My children does not want to live there.

MK: So, you came back?

LM: We came back. We left my husband there.

MK: And later, your husband joined the family here?

LM: Yeah, about a year. When we came here already, we used to stay with my daughter, my oldest daughter, in Waialua. Because she used to live there with her husband. But her husband went to Korea for the war. So, we used to live with her. After that, when we came to Honolulu in 1952, it so happened that there was opening in the Tripler Hospital, too. He went back after that.

MK: What kind of work was he doing at Tripler?

LM: Ward attendant.

MK: Why is it that you moved here to Kalihi and not some other place in town?

LM: Because this is the place where we like it very much. The bus is close, the stores are close, and it was very convenient for us to live here.

MK: How did you locate this house?

LM: Because it was on sale at that time. This lot has a house, older house than this. It was nice yet, but I want to build new house. So, we demolished that house and we build this one.

MK: When you first moved to this area, what did the neighborhood look like? Describe the other houses around here for me back in 1952.

LM: My neighbor on this side, a Portuguese family was living here. They are very nice people, friendly. On our other side is a Hawaiian. They are all right, too.

MK: How about the rest of the neighborhood in your street area?

LM: Oh, well, they are good because mostly Filipinos on that side at that time.

MK: The Filipinos that are living in this area back in the 1950s, were they people from the plantation or were they people who came more recently?

LM: They are from the plantation, too. Some other plantations.

MK: Because they are many Filipinos here, did you and the pastor get together with the other Filipinos in the neighborhood?

LM: Yes. We go. As usual, you know, Filipinos are gathering together, too. At that time, also, while my husband is working in Tripler Hospital, I used to work, too, in a convalescent home. I wanted

to be a nurse, too, in the hospital, I took my examination. But you know how it is. I didn't pass my test. Just a little bit only I didn't pass my test. So now, when I found a job in a convalescent home, that's where I was working, too, while he was working in the hospital. That's when I went.

We send our children to. . . . My two youngest one, my son Paul, and my daughter Gloria. They were in Mid-Pacific [Institute]. They graduated there. But they wanted to go to the Mainland, so they went to the Mainland [later] and studied there. My son went to the Air Force first, but then he changed his mind. He went to the seminary. Protestant. He was a minister, too, when he was young. He's a minister because he was ordained minister, but, of course, he is not working now in the church. He is teaching now in Mid-Pac. Once, he was a dean of the boys there. Now, he's teaching. My daughter, when she graduated in Indiana teacher's college, she masters French and Spanish, and she majors in English. Now, she is teaching Radford High School, French and Spanish. Junior and senior.

MK: And for yourself, when did you retire?

LM: Well, at that time, you know, when I was working, my husband is working yet in Tripler. As I was working, we managed to form services at home. We have some congregations at home. We were plenty at that time, too. Services in the evening, because we don't have time in the morning. Now, after that, maybe about a year, the late Reverend Emilio C. Yadao came to us and asked my husband and I to join to build a church in Wahiawa. So, we then get together with him. My husband and he, the late Reverend Yadao, build the church in Wahiawa.

MK: When was that?

LM: If I'm not mistaken--1955, '56, something like that.

MK: So, while your husband was working at Tripler and . . .

LM: The late Reverend Yadao is with the union, too. So, they have only part-time church work.

MK: So, your husband helped?

LM: Helped. [Rev. Yadao] was the pastor and [LM's husband] was the associate pastor.

MK: I was wondering about when you were working at the convalescent home, did you work there many years?

LM: I don't know how many years, but I worked there until I retired.

MK: When did you retire?

LM: When I was sixty-five. I don't know about that now because I'm eighty now.

MK: Going back to the topic of Kalihi, when you moved here there's Portuguese, Hawaiian, and already . . .

LM: Yeah, Japanese, too. We have plenty Japanese here, too.

MK: And many Filipinos?

LM: Yes. Around here, get plenty Japanese at that time. Mostly Japanese.

MK: Most Japanese?

LM: Mm hmm [yes]. In this lane. This side.

MK: Where were the Filipinos living?

LM: Kaumualii [Street], some of them. Over here, Ahuula [Street], some of them. And Kahanu [Street], some of them. Even Ashford [Street], some of them, too.

MK: What types of businesses were in the business district right above here? There's Muraoka Department Store.

LM: You know, barbershop. Old barbershop there and some small restaurant there. Saimin place, that side. That's what I remember.

MK: In Kalihi, have there been many Filipino-owned businesses?

LM: Not that I know, but some of them . . .

MK: Can you tell me the names of the Filipino businessmen who were active in Kalihi?

LM: I forget their names already, those people.

MK: Can you tell me what kinds of businesses they had?

LM: It's not very many at that time here.

MK: You know, nowadays, people say that in Kalihi, they are many Filipino families. Have you noticed that kind of change since the 1950s?

LM: Very much.

MK: Can you tell me in what areas you've noticed more and more Filipino families living nowadays?

LM: Mostly all the areas have plenty Filipinos now living there. Up here. Mostly, up here. Mostly, even on the other side. Even on that side, below Dillingham, mostly Filipinos are living now.

- MK: In your work as a minister's wife, you come in contact with the newer Filipino residents?
- LM: Yes, but not all the time, because our church is in Wahiawa. So, I have to go out and see those families sometimes. I bring them to Wahiawa with my car. Take them to Wahiawa church. Wahiawa Christian Church.
- MK: When you talk with the newer Filipino residents in Kalihi, what do you hear them say about Kalihi?
- LM: Well, I think they like it here because everything is close. It's all convenient for them to go anywhere, even you go to the bars. We have a people market, too, in here. Just in Kalihi Street. So, everything is very convenient for everyone. Even Japanese, even Filipinos, even what nationality are there.
- MK: You lived in Kalihi thirty years already. What do you think are the major changes in Kalihi since you moved here?
- LM: Plenty build their beautiful homes now. And they all are working. Some of them get business. This store over here, Honolulu Variety Store, is owned by a Filipino now. You see that Honolulu Variety Store? That's owned by Filipino now. My neighbor on this side. On my left side.
- MK: Who used to own it before?
- LM: She was a Chinese. Yeah. And then, a Japanese bought it. And then, this Japanese, they are still living here on this lane. He sold it to this Filipino lady.
- MK: You've lived here in Kalihi for thirty years already, what are your feelings about your life in Kalihi?
- LM: Well, it was wonderful. My children like it here, too, before. When they get married already, well, my husband and I only live here. But I used to work yet in the convalescent home. After that, I quit the convalescent home because I had a care home. I just quit from the care home last month.
- MK: Oh, so you were taking care of people here, too?
- LM: Yes.
- MK: Oh, you've been very busy, then?
- LM: Yeah, right.
- MK: When you look back on your life, growing up in Laoag and going through a parental marriage, coming to Hawaii and living in Hawaii for so many years, over fifty years, what do you think about your life?

KALIHI: Place of Transition

Vol. I

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